



CHRIST CHURCH
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A MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH ON THE HILL

SPECIAL SUMMER EDITION



**LEAN ON ME, WHEN YOU ARE NOT STRONG...
I'LL HELP YOU CARRY ON**

Vicar's five-minute reflection

LEAN ON ME, WHEN YOU'RE NOT STRONG...



*Sometimes in our lives we all have pain
We all have sorrow
But if we are wise
We know that there's always tomorrow*



*Lean on me, when you're not strong
And I'll be your friend
I'll help you carry on
For it won't be long
'Til I'm gonna need
Somebody to lean on...*



It was Bill Withers who wrote the above popular song many years ago titled "Lean on me", and somehow I found myself singing it a few days ago when my spirit was at a low ebb and my heart wandered to a passage of the scriptures, Song of Songs or Song of Solomon 8:5: "Who is this coming up from the desert leaning on her lover?" The closer I looked at the passage the more I was able to find myself leaning on Jesus Christ my beloved. My sorrow, my pain, my confusion, my disappointment became bearable because I had Someone I could lean on. My heart started to think of all that Jesus Christ is and is able to do for those who lean on him. Am I alone in this type of occasional drifting into a low ebb of the soul? No! Many saints of God in the past and present have been there -in this desert - Spurgeon, one of my spiritual mentors was there and he learnt a lot from seeing Jesus as the broad and able shoulder on which to lean. Why? Why lean on Jesus when you are not strong? Why lean on Jesus when you have pain? Why lean on him when you have sorrow and sighs? There are many reasons. I lean upon our beloved Jesus as God and man especially at times when I feel that none but God could bear me up. There are other times when, under a sense of sin, I have distanced myself from God and felt that none but the Man Christ Jesus could minister peace to my anguished heart.

C.H Spurgeon in one of his sermons offers some answers: *"Taking Christ in double nature as God and man, he becomes thus a suitable leaning place for our spirit, whatever may happen to be the state in which our mind is found...* (continued on next page)



We lean upon him as priest; we expect our offerings, our praises and our prayers to be received, because they are presented through him.

Our leaning for acceptance is on him. We lean upon him as our prophet. We do not profess to know or to be able to discover truth of ourselves, but we sit at his feet, and what he teaches we receive as certainty.

We lean upon him as our King. He shall fight our battles for us and manage all the affairs of our heavenly citizenship. We have no hope of victory but in the strength of him who is the Son of David and the King of kings.

We lean upon Christ in all his attributes. Sometimes it is his wisdom - in our dilemmas he directs us; at other times it is his faithfulness - in our strong temptations he abides the same. At one time his power gleams out like a golden pillar and we rest on it, and at another moment his tenderness becomes conspicuous and we lean on that. There is not a trait of his character, not a mark of his person, whether human or divine, upon which we do not feel it is safe to lean, because he is as a whole, Christ - perfection's own self, lovely and excellent beyond all description."

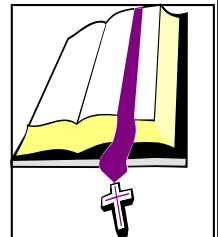
We will be the loser if we do not lean our entire weight upon him. We need to trust the Lord Jesus with all our heart and to acknowledge him in all our ways. There is no value in leaning upon our own understanding nor in professing to lean upon the Lord while actually going our own ways. God's care for birds, and for cattle and for the lilies is a powerful reminder to us that he cares for people even more. Who is this coming from the desert of life leaning on his lover? It is me Dele Agbelusi and now I can sing the song of my beloved. He loves me I cannot tell why...

Dele Agbelusi

MEMORY VERSE

"Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows."

Luke 12:6-7



TOGETHERNESS IN MARRIAGE



When husbands focus only on their interests and wives focus only on their interests, the bonds of marriage break. Building togetherness in each of the following areas will strengthen your marriage and increase your love.

1. Emotional togetherness - being tuned into each other's feeling.
2. Intellectual togetherness - sharing thoughts, ideas, opinions, and beliefs.
3. Aesthetic togetherness - enjoying the beauty and artistry of life.
4. Recreational togetherness- having fun and excitement as a couple.
5. Work togetherness - doing common, everyday tasks and chores as a team.
6. Crisis togetherness - leaning on each other when times are hard.
7. Sexual togetherness - bonding through physical closeness.
8. Spiritual togetherness - drawing closer to God and encouraging each other's faith.



50 GIFTS FOR MARRIAGE

1. Start each day with a kiss.
2. Wear your wedding ring at all times.
3. Date once a week.
4. Accept differences.
5. Be polite.
6. Be gentle.
7. Give gifts.
8. Smile often.
9. Touch.
10. Talk about dreams.
11. Choose a song that can be "your song".
12. Give back rubs.
13. Laugh together.
14. Send a card for no reason.
15. Do what your spouse wants before being asked.
16. Listen.
17. Encourage.
18. Do it the other's way.
19. Know your mate's needs.
20. Fix his (or her) favourite breakfast.
21. Compliment your partner twice a day.
22. Call just to say "I love you".
23. Slow down.
24. Hold hands.
25. Cuddle.
26. Ask your spouse's opinion.
27. Show respect.
28. Welcome each other home.
29. Look your best for your mate.
30. Wink at each other.
31. Celebrate birthdays in a big way.
32. Apologise.
33. Forgive.
34. Set up a romantic getaway.
35. Ask, "What can I do to make you happier?"
36. Be positive.
37. Be kind.
38. Be vulnerable.
39. Respond quickly to your mate's requests.
40. Talk about your love.
41. Reminisce about your favourite times together.
42. Treat his (or her) friends and relatives with courtesy.



43. Send flowers every Valentine's Day and anniversary.
44. Admit when you are wrong.
45. Be sensitive to your mate's sexual desires.
46. Pray for him (or her) daily.
47. Watch sunsets together.
48. Say "I love you" frequently.
49. End each day with a hug.
50. Seek outside help when you need it.

- Dr Steve Stephens, from
"Understanding the one you Love"

TOO FAT TO FLY - NOT ANYMORE

A man who was so obese that he couldn't go on holiday has lost enough weight to take his first flight abroad in 34 years. 54-year old Pete Russell says he was so ashamed of his weight that he couldn't face trying to sit on an aircraft wearing the 'fat man's seatbelt'. The shame meant that he never went on holiday abroad with his wife, his children or his grandchildren. Eventually, his desire to go on holiday with his family - along with a serious warning that his obesity was life-threatening - prompted him to shed a total of ten stone in just ten months.



Ex-serviceman Pete Russell piled on weight after a tumour in his spine left him bedridden. He ate so much that at one point he weighed 25 stone. He suffered years of ill health and abuse because of his weight, but it wasn't until a nurse told him bluntly he would be dead within five years that he joined a slimming group.

Now the newer, lighter Pete has booked his first family holiday to Spain - and he's delighted that he won't have to face wearing the dreaded bright orange extra large seatbelt. Pete, from Wareham, Dorset, said the boredom of being bedridden drove him to over-eat, scoffing crisps, chocolate and peanuts between unhealthy ready meals. Even when he was back on his feet he suffered public humiliation, including taunts in the street such as 'who ate all the pies' and 'wide load'.

Then, last year, when he tested positive for Type 2 diabetes, a nurse told him he wouldn't live for much longer if he didn't change his ways. Pete joined a diet class with his wife Kate, 52, who has also lost six-and-a-half stone.

He said: 'It's amazing. If you'd told me this time last year I'd lose ten stone and be booking a holiday, I wouldn't have believed it.'

-Concluded on page 7

YOU SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH

Truth is an established fact that is constant and cannot change with time or circumstances. Thus it is true when we say that all truth is God's truth. No one can bend the truth and 7 billion votes against the truth can never over ride it. Ignorance of the truth about fire by a child who puts his hand in it will not stop the fire from burning him. Denying the truth that Jesus Christ is the only remedy for man's sins leaves the individual without a cure for his/her sins. Knowing truth is important but living out truth is the real deal. Until you respond to truth with a level of conviction that you will rather die than betray your conscience to the truth you are convinced of, you have not really known the truth and you cannot be free." Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." John 8:32. You know several truths like: existence of God, sin, hell, heaven, the Bible being God's Word, death, judgment, etc. When you live contrary to these truths or easily compromise them for some temporary benefit, then you clearly demonstrate that you have rejected the truth and have become a rebel, a slave to sin and are in bondage to Satan. Only by living out the truth can you be free. When we believe a truth we must respond as Martin Luther did with full conviction and a determination to pay the price: "I cannot and will not recant anything, for to go against conscience is neither right nor safe. Here I stand, I can do no other, so help me God. Amen."

-Sunday & Grace Bwanhot

Too fat to fly - Not anymore

(continued from page 6)

'We have been married 34 years and haven't been away in all that time. I was too embarrassed to fly because I knew I'd be given one of those bright orange fat man's seat belts.

'Once, I was at a barbecue and sat on a plastic chair. It broke, and 30 people turned to stare at me - I just wanted the ground to swallow me up. Another time, I got stuck in a turnstile at a football match and had to be rescued by the officials. It was humiliating.'

Pete cut out fatty snacks of crisps and chocolate and began eating home-made healthy meals. Pete is now running his own Slimming World class in Dorset.

-Katy Holland

TABLE FOR TWO

A “MUST READ” FOR EVERY ONE WITH A SOUL

He sits by himself at a table for two. The uniformed waiter appears at his side. “Would you like to go ahead and order, sir?” The man has, after all, been waiting since seven o’clock—almost half an hour.

“No thank you,” the man says with a smile. “I’ll wait for her a while longer. How about some more coffee?” “Certainly, sir.”

The man sits, his deep brown eyes gazing straight through the flowered centrepiece. He fingers his napkin, allowing the sounds of light chatter, tinkling silverware, and mellow music to fill his mind. Dressed in a sport coat and tie with his dark brown hair neatly combed, he projects a clean-cut and welcoming image. You get the sense that he wants his companion to feel important, respected, loved. Yet he’s not so formal as to make one uncomfortable. Having taken every precaution to make others feel at ease with him, still, he sits alone. The waiter returns to fill the man’s coffee cup.

“Is there anything else I can get for you, sir?” “No, thank you.” The waiter remains standing at the table. Something tugs at his curiosity. “I don’t mean to pry, but...” His voice trails off. This line of conversation could jeopardize his tip, if not his job.

“Go ahead,” the man encourages. His voice is strong, yet sensitive, inviting conversation. “Why do you bother waiting for her?” the waiter finally asks. This man has been at the restaurant other evenings, always alone, always patient.

“Because she needs me.”

“Are you sure?”

“Yes.”

“Why do you bother waiting for her?” the waiter finally asks. This man has been at the restaurant other evenings, always alone, always patient. “Because she needs me.”

“Well, sir, no offence sir, but assuming that she needs you, she sure isn’t acting much like it. She’s stood you up three times just this week!”

(continued on page 9)

Table for two A “must read” for everyone with a soul

The man winces, and looks down. “Yes, I know.”

“Then why do you still come here and wait?”

“Cassie said she’d be here.”

“She’s said that before,” the waiter protests. “I wouldn’t put up with it. Why do you?”

Now the man looks up at the waiter with a smile. “Because I love her.”

The waiter walks away, wondering how one could love a girl who stands him up three times a week. The man must be crazy, he decides. From across the room he turns to look again at the man, who is pouring cream into his coffee cup. He twirls his spoon between his fingers a few times before stirring sweetener into his cup. After staring for a moment into the liquid, the man brings the cup to his mouth and sips, silently watching those around him. He doesn’t look crazy, the waiter admits. Maybe the girl has extraordinary qualities. Or maybe the man’s love is stronger than most. Pulling himself out of his musings, he moves to take an order from a party of five.

Setting down his coffee cup, the man recalls the many things he wanted to talk over with Cassie. But really he was mostly looking forward to hearing her voice telling him about her day—her triumphs, her defeats...anything. Yes, she’s stood him up before, but he still can’t get used to it. Each time, it hurts. He’s looked forward to this evening all day. He’s tried so many times to show Cassie how much he loves her. He’d just like to know that she cares for him, too. He sips sporadically at the coffee. He hopes Cassie may yet arrive.

The clock says nine-thirty when the waiter returns to the man’s table—still with one empty chair.

“Anything I can get for you?” (continued on page 10)

Table for two A “must read” for everyone with a soul

“No, I think that will be all for tonight. May I have the bill, please?”

“Yes, sir.” When the waiter leaves, the man picks up the bill. He pulls out his wallet and signs a cheque. He has enough money to have given Cassie a feast. But he takes out only enough to pay for his five cups of coffee and the tip. Why do you do this, Cassie, his mind cries as he gets up from the table.

“Good-bye,” the waiter says, as the man walks towards the door.

“Good night. Thank you for your service.”

“You’re welcome, sir,” says the waiter softly, for he sees the hurt in the man’s eyes that his smile doesn’t hide. The man passes a laughing young couple on his way out, and his eyes glisten as he thinks of the good time he and Cassie could have had. He stops at the front and makes reservations for tomorrow. Maybe Cassie will be able to make it, he thinks.

“Seven o’clock tomorrow for a party of two?” the hostess confirms.

“That’s right,” the man replies.

“Do you think she’ll come?” asks the hostess as she inquires tentatively. She doesn’t mean to be rude, but she has watched the man many times alone at his table for two.

“Someday, yes. And I will be there waiting for her.” The man buttons his overcoat and walks out of the restaurant, alone. His shoulders are hunched, but through the windows the hostess can only guess whether they are hunched against the wind or against the man’s hurt.

About the time the man steers his car out of the restaurant’s parking lot, Cassie falls into her bed. Tired after an evening out with friends, she reaches toward her night stand to set the alarm.

Concluded on page 22

DON'T WASTE A CRISIS

Crises, while unwanted, are windows of opportunity for the Cure of Souls

I once was part of a survey on spiritual formation. Thousands of people were asked when they grew most spiritually, and what contributed to their growth. The response was humbling—at least for someone who works in a church.

The number one contributor to spiritual growth among other things according to the respondents was suffering. People said they grew more during seasons of loss, pain, and crisis than they did at any other time. I immediately realized that, as a church, we had not even put anybody in charge of pain distribution! So now we are figuring out how to create more pain per attendee for maximum spiritual growth!

Actually, the wonderful and terrible thing about crisis is that it's the one resource we do not have to fund or staff or program. It just comes. However, pain does not automatically produce spiritual growth. Ghettos and abusive homes and trauma wards may produce scarred souls; they can cripple more human spirits than they strengthen.

Crisis can lead to soul strength, but not if the soul is starved of other nutrients, and not apart from certain responses. If we have not thought carefully about the intersection of crisis and ministry, we may have neglected the most soul-formative moments that occur in the lives of our people. So what does wisdom teach about crisis and the cure of souls?

First, do no harm ... No one wants pain. Not even long-time, mature Christians who want to grow. We will always find ways to avoid pain. Pain itself is a bad thing. It is a little known fact that in Chinese, the word crisis is made up of two characters: "life" and "stinks." Well, that may not be true, but the place to begin in crisis is with simple humanity. When someone is in crisis, don't start by teaching, leveraging, or explaining. Just be with.

(continued next page)

Don't Waste a Crisis

Perhaps the single most disobeyed command the apostle Paul ever wrote was "Mourn with those who mourn." He doesn't say, "Give good advice to those who mourn." He doesn't say, "Tell mourners to suck it up because plenty of people have it worse." He doesn't say, "Rebuke mourners because being around someone who's unhappy gets in the way of my own unbridled demand for incessant pleasantness." No, mourn with those who mourn. We do not need answers or formulas to minister in crisis.

Nicholas Wolterstorff is a brilliant Yale philosopher whose 25-year-old son died in a mountain-climbing accident. His *Lament for a Son* is as searingly painful and beautiful as any book on suffering I know. He points out that what we need—even more than we need answers—is Presence. Wolterstorff writes that what has moved him deeply is the Presence of the Crucified Christ who chooses to suffer with suffering people. He notes that Scripture says no one can see the face of God and live. He always thought that meant no one can see God's glory and live. But now he wonders if perhaps it means no one can see God's suffering and live.

Or perhaps God's suffering is his glory. In crisis, especially in deep crisis, we may not be able to bring answers. But we can always bring presence.

When Job hit his crisis, he was surrounded by his friends: Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar. They went to Job to "sympathize with him." The Hebrew verb here, *nud*, refers to body movement—shaking back and forth, nodding the head. You see this sometimes when people experience trauma and go into shock, rocking themselves back and forth like a mother does with her baby. Their love is so strong, their grief is so great, that they sit next to him and take on his anguish. "They sat on the ground with him for seven days and seven nights. No one said a word to him because they saw how great his suffering was." It's worth pausing here for a moment. Imagine sitting with someone in silence for seven days. This was such a powerful act, it became part of Jewish life; To this day they speak of "*sitting shiva*"—literally "sitting sevens." Friends will come and sit with one who mourns over a period of a week.

I have a friend whose dad died. Someone from her church asked her, "Was your dad a Christian?" (continued next page)

Don't Waste a Crisis

Maybe they wanted to minimize her grief by saying her dad was in heaven. When she told them no, he was not a Christian, the other person just walked away. They were prepared to try to minimize mourning, but not to enter into it.

It's interesting that after the seven days, Job's friends will speak. A lot. They'll get into trouble with God for what they say. Job's friends have taken a lot of heat over the years—for good reasons. Their words are not so hot. But their silence was brilliant. Their silence was a gift.

Maybe one reason Job is able to struggle with God in such honesty and persistence is he had friends who would take on his sorrow in seven days of silence.

Ministry in crisis takes time

This immediately raises a critical issue for pastoral life today, which is the level of "hurry sickness" we all have. Because you cannot mourn in a hurry. Speed may be good when it comes to ambulances and Internet connections—maybe even when it comes to the length of sermons, if my wife can be trusted—but all the technology at MIT cannot microwave the healing of a human heart. Our time-insanity has gone so far over the top that I actually saw an ad for a pharmaceutical product with this caption: "For the busy woman who simply does not have time for a yeast infection." You mean some women do?

One of the ironies of crises is that often we have them because we feel we have no time—only to find that when the crisis hits, we suddenly have nothing else. A man is so caught up in the demands of his career that he simply does not have time to devote to his marriage. Until his wife leaves him, and the divorce takes massive amounts of money and hours with lawyers and days in court, and suddenly he finds himself at home alone with all kinds of time.

A pastor is so busy with his church that he simply does not have time to be with his teenage daughter. Until she runs away from home. Then he spends every day in prayer, in tears, checking with police departments, talking with counsellors.

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Don't Waste a Crisis

If there is not enough time to deal with small crises, then eventually the pace of your life will create a large one. Then you will have time.

So here's a little litmus test for your pace of life: can you mourn with those who mourn? Your church may well be too large for you to mourn with all the mourners. Ray Johnston of Bayside Church near me has a wonderful expression: he said that as the church grew, he realized that "the people would have to pastor the people." But if you are a church leader, there will be some co-workers or board members or key volunteers who hit a crisis. Will you have time to mourn with those whom God calls you to mourn with? If you don't, and if some day your own time for mourning comes—and it will come—who will mourn with you?

Last summer, for the first time, I took a sabbatical. Our elders provided it. In fact, they insisted on it. I had firm instructions: don't write anything, don't speak anywhere, don't do anything productive. I was surprisingly good at it. But during this period, a college teacher of mine who was much-beloved by my closest circle of college friends, passed away. We were all able to gather back at the college, to remember and laugh and cry and pray, and stay up late at night and eat breakfast till noon. It dawned on me that part of why I was able to mourn in the way I think it was meant to be done—to mourn with ache and confusion and gratitude and wonder—is that I wasn't preoccupied with too many tasks for my soul to handle. Of course, I can't always be on sabbatical... [John Ortberg](#)

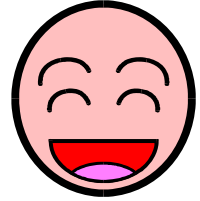
CROSSLINKS MAGAZINE NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT!

In order to improve our ministry to you through the print medium, we would appreciate your feedback and responses to our featured writings and writers. We also welcome articles, testimonies, jokes, which are not more than 500 words in length.

Above all, we value your prayers as Crosslinks celebrates 11 years of production in September 2011.

LAUGHTER LINES

An Order of Ribs



In Miss Lilie's kindergarten Sunday school class, she was teaching how everything in the world was created by God, including human beings. Little Georgie was particularly interested in how Eve was created out of Adam's rib.

Later in the week the five-year-old's mother found him lying down as though he were ill. She asked him, "Georgie, what's the matter?"

To which Georgie replied, "I have a pain in my side. I think I'm going to have a wife."

Tongue in Cheek

Adam was walking around the Garden of Eden feeling very lonely, causing God to ask, "What's wrong with you, Adam? Adam replied that he didn't have anyone to talk to. So God announced that he was going to give him a companion - a woman. "A woman?" Adam replied.

Then God described her, "She will be someone to cook for you and wash your clothes. She will always agree with every decision you make. She will bear your children and never ask you to get up in the middle of the night to care for them. This woman will not nag you and will always be the first to admit when she is wrong. She will never have a headache and will freely give you love and compassion whenever you need it."

"What is she going to cost me, God?" Adam asked.

"An arm and a leg," God responded.

Adam thought a moment and asked, "What can I get for just a rib?"

The rest is history.

NEWS AND EVENTS



The horror and devastation that suicide bombers cause in distant lands usually seen on television were brought to Nigeria forcefully, when a suicide bomber struck at the headquarters of the Nigeria Police in Abuja. The pictures above and below are the aftermath of a bomb blast by Muslim extremists called *Boko Haram* (translates to “no education”) in the capital city of Nigeria, Abuja on June 16 this year. Please Pray for Nigeria and remember many Christians especially in the Northern part of the Country who have lost loved ones, their homes and means of livelihood due to the incessant attacks of these faceless terrorists.



MAIN SERVICES IN JULY AND AUGUST

<u>Date</u>	<u>10:30am</u>	<u>6:00pm</u>
17th July	(FS) God who delivers Judges 15	Supremacy and sufficiency of Christ (Col. 1:15-23)
24th July	(HC) God who remembers Judges 16; Luke 14:25-34	Servanthood is making others successful (Col. 1:24-29)
31st July	(HS) I know His name Gen. 14:17-24; 15:1-6	Receiving Christ is only the beginning (Col. 2:1-7)
7th Aug.	(MP) Truly, You are the Son of God Matthew 14:17-24; 15:1-6	God can do nothing greater (Col. 2: 8-15)
14th Aug.	(HC) Enduring faith Matth. 15: 21-28	Keep connected (Col. 2: 16-23)
21st Aug.	(HC) The lost son, Luke 15:11-the end	Our chief business (Col. 3:1-10)
28th Aug.	(HC) Get behind me, Matt. 16: 21-end	NO EVENING SERVICE
4th Sept.	(MP) Where are you? Gen. 3:1-10	The character of equality (Col. 3:11- 4:1)
11th Sept.	(FS) Who told you? Gen. 3:8-12	First talk to God (Col. 4:2-6)

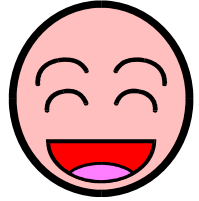
**Note: HC denotes Holy Communion (Common Worship);
MP— Morning Prayer;
FS, Family Service;
HS— Healing and Anointing Service**

**There is Holy Communion Service every Sunday at 8am using
the Book of Common Prayer**

LAUGHTER LINES

When The "Tithe" Comes In

Two men were shipwrecked on a desert island. One was a churchgoer and the other was not. The minute they arrived on the island, the non-churchgoer began screaming and yelling, "We're going to die!"



The other man was calmly propped against a palm tree, which drove the other guy crazy. "Don't you understand? We're going to die! What's wrong with you?"

"You don't understand," said the churchgoer, "I make one hundred thousand dollars a week."

"What difference does that make?" asked the non-churchgoer. "We're on a desert island. We're going to die."

The churchgoer smiled, "You just don't get it. I make one hundred thousand dollars a week, and I tithe. My pastor will find me!"

Experience Pays

Reverend: "In this church's vacancy for the post of a secretary, we need someone who is responsible."

Applicant: "That's me! In my last job, when anything went wrong, they said I was responsible."

A Vision of Swine

At the beginning of children's Bible club, we always review the previous week's lesson. Getting the conversation going one evening about the story of Peter's vision of the heavenly sheet filled with animals, another teacher asked, "What did Peter see when he went up on the housetop to pray?" One little boy waved his hand and yelled, "Pigs in a blanket!"

LEAN ON ME

When I was yet a tiny fir tree
Shallow-rooted, supple, thin;
Another young tree grew beside me
And I thought it rude of him.

I needed space; refused to share -
Why couldn't he just go away?
About his needs I did not care,
But always wanted my own way.

Then one fateful day at dawn
As dew drops sparkled on my leaves,
I saw a doe and her young fawn
Approaching our copse of trees.

A hoof crushed me as they went by;
And I was broken; bent -
I offered up a silent cry
Believing that my life was spent.

"Don't weep, brother; I am here -
Lean on me for I am strong";
'Twas the voice of one so near;
The one I used to treat so wrong.

Many years have come and gone,
And seasons good and ill;
Though we have both grown tall and strong
I lean against him still.

If you should come upon some trees
And notice one is bent,
Look closer and you might just see
It's leaning on its friend.

Belinda van Rensburg

LAUGHTER LINES EXTRA

Am I Driving?

Two elderly women were out driving in a large car where both could barely see over the dashboard. As they were cruising along, they came to a junction. The traffic light was red, but they just went on through. The woman in the passenger seat thought to herself, "I must be losing it, but I could have sworn we just went through a red light."



After a few more minutes they came to another junction, and the light was red again, and again they went right through. This time the woman in the passenger seat was almost sure that the light had been red but was really very concerned that she was losing her mind. She was getting nervous and decided to pay very close attention to the road and the next junction to see what was going on.

At the next junction, sure enough, the light was definitely red, and they did go right through it! She turned to the other woman and said, "Mildred! Did you know we just ran through three red lights in a row? You could have killed us!"

Mildred turned to her and said, "Oh, am I driving?"

Power Nap?

During a recent visit with my parents, my two-year-old daughter, Kylee, sat at the kitchen table eating her lunch. My mom joined her, closed her eyes, and bowed her head to say a silent prayer for her food. Kylee watched inquisitively. As my mom raised her head and opened her eyes, Kylee asked, "Nana, did you have a nice nap?"

—Pamela Mack, South Dakota. Today's Christian Woman, "Small Talk."

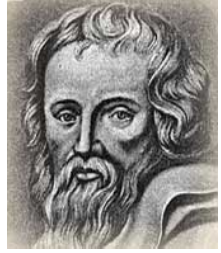
DO YOU KNOW?

This year, 2011, July has 5 Fridays, 5 Saturdays and 5 Sundays. This happens once every 823 years. I got this from the London Link, June-July 2011 Issue 115.

Vera Freeburne

APOSTOLIC BEHEADING: THE DEATH OF PAUL

The apostle Paul, writing to the Corinthian church, summed up his own contribution to Christianity better than anyone else could. "For I am the least of the apostles, who am not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me." Wherever he carried the gospel, the church put down deep and enduring roots. He saw himself as primarily an apostle to the Gentile races.



Paul was ideally equipped for the role. In him three great cultures merged. A Roman citizen, he had entree to the entire Roman world. Steeped in Greek culture, he could convey his ideas across the Hellenized world. A Pharisee, strictest of the Jews, he carried in himself the Mosaic law and had points of contact in the synagogues of the empire.

Paul began his career as a persecutor of the faith. After meeting Christ in a daylight vision on the road to Damascus, where he was travelling to arrest Christians, his life was transformed. Christ ever after was all to him and he gave us insights into the Lord as deep as any found in the writings of the apostles who walked with the Lord. "I resolved to know nothing among you except Christ, and him crucified." "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless, I live; Yet not I, but Christ lives in me." "He was the firstborn over all creation." "That at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, both in heaven and the earth and under the earth."

In addition to his Christology, Paul pioneered the missionary tactics of the early church, brought the gospel to the Gentiles and came as close as any apostolic writer to creating a systematic theology. His Letter to the Romans has had a profound impact upon our understanding of guilt and grace, predestination and faith.

(continued on next page)

Apostolic Beheading: the Death of Paul

(continued from page 21)

Wherever reformation has come to the church the ideas of this epistle have played a leading part. His letters were prized by the early church. His fellow apostle Peter recognized their worth and included them with the other scriptures.

According to *The People's Chronology*, Paul was beheaded with a sword near Rome, possibly on June 29, 67. This date is open to dispute. Paul's death has been variously placed between 62 and 67. We shall probably never know for sure.

What we do know is that he gave his life for the faith he had persecuted. At his conversion, a prophet named Ananias was sent to him to show him what things he must suffer. In an early letter he catalogued some of those sufferings. It is a long list. His beheading was but the culmination of a life of sacrifice "poured out as a drink offering" to his Lord Jesus Christ (2 Tim. 4:6).

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Table for two

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"Oh, blimey," she says aloud when she sees the note she had scribbled to herself the previous night. "Seven o'clock p.m....and what'd I write here?...oh, yeah, Spend some time in prayer. Well, I'll do it tomorrow night for sure."

Besides, she told herself, she needed tonight with her friends—and now she needs her sleep. Tomorrow night will be fine. Jesus will forgive her. She's sure he doesn't mind.

In your heart, you thought the man's date was heartless. Hmm. Could this be you? Are you the one standing up your beloved? The most important part of daily devotions is showing up. It doesn't matter what you say or do. Just take time every day to spend a little time with the One who loves you and waits patiently for you to come. He wants to tell you how much he loves you.

HEAVENLY CORRESPONDENCE

E-MAIL FROM GOD (30)

File Edit View Options Tools Help

Send Contacts Spell Attach Security Save

From: **GOD, YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER**

To: **You, My beloved child**

For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. (Psalm 139:13-14)

Subject: **JUST BE YOU**

My beloved child,

Sometimes you don't like your looks and you blame Me. You ask, "Why didn't you give me perfect skin like this person" or "a perfect body like that person?"

You're letting magazines and movies define good looks for you. You're listening to the lies of a money-hungry world. They want to sell you skin treatments and diet books, so they convince you something's wrong with you. Remember when Jesus found money changers doing business in the temple? He went ballistic!

You are the temple in which My Sprit wants to make a home, and it infuriates Me to see these money grubbers trying to sell you a lie. I'm the One Who thought you up, and I love what I made! You're the only you I've got. So just be you!

Your Creator,
God.

Adapted from 'e-mail from God for Teens'-Clonigers

MOTTO/TEXT FOR THE YEAR

“I WANT TO KNOW CHRIST AND THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION...” (Philip. 3:10)

FINDING OUT ABOUT ...CHRIST CHURCH?

Tel/Fax: 020 8340 1566

We are a family of men and women, boys and girls who are resolved to live for God in a world that has largely chosen to ignore Him.

We believe that it is God's world and that He has given the answer to all human problems in Jesus Christ. As a body of believers, we offer to all who come, regular opportunities for worship and service that point the way to God as our strongest resources in all aspects of life.

We will be pleased to welcome you to any of our activities. You will find a warm welcome at Christ Church.

Times of worship and fellowship are shown below:

- Sunday**
- **8.00 am.** Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
 - **10.30 am.** Main service with Crèche facilities
- There is family/parade service once every month - usually the third Sunday of the month unless otherwise indicated.
- **6.00 pm.** Evening worship

WEEKLY ACTIVITIES AT A GLANCE

- Sunday** - Choir practice in church (9.30 am)
- Monday**
- Baby n' Toddler Group (9.30 am to 11.30 am)
 - Brownies meeting in church (5.30 pm)
 - Prayer meetings in church - 18th July, 1st and 15th August (8 pm)
- Wednesday** - Alpha in church - (6.30 pm for 7.15pm start)
- Friday**
- Bible Fellowship in church - West Chapel (2.00 pm)
 - Scouts meeting in church and hall (6.30 pm)
 - Music Team practice in choir vestry (6.00 pm)
- Saturday** - Cell group prayer meeting in church. 7-8pm

Enquiry/Counselling/Prayer Lifeline - please phone 020 8340 1566

Editorial Board: Sheila Wheeler, Iyabo Agbelusi, Dele Agbelusi

Voice Edition: Sheila Wheeler, Peter Green, Dele Agbelusi

Vicar: Revd Canon Dele Agbelusi

Church Wardens: Peter Green, Mervin Bentham, Charles Murphy

Lay Ministers: Richard Mercer, Iyabo Agbelusi

Organist: Position vacant

YOUR COMMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS ARE WELCOME

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